KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Report on Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) performance for students in A2-A6 programs

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

703 KAR 5:040, KRS 158.6451, 1586453, and 158.6455

History/Background:

Existing Policy. In June 2004, the Kentucky Board of Education gave final approval to 703 KAR 5:040, Statewide Assessment and Accountability Program; Relating Accountability to A1 Schools And A2-A6 Programs. This regulation indicates the assignment of accountability for CATS results for students in A2-A6 programs. While the majority of schools are "A1" schools under administrative control of a principal and eligible to establish a school-based decision making council, some alternative or special programs exist as follows:

- An "A2" program means a district-operated, totally vocational-technical program.
- An "A3" program means a district-operated, totally special education program.
- An "A4" program means a district-operated, totally preschool program.
- An "A5" program means an alternative program that is a district-operated and district-controlled facility with no definable attendance boundaries that is designed to provide services to at-risk populations with unique needs.
- An "A6" program means a district-operated instructional program in a nondistrict-operated institution or school.

Prior to the approval of this regulation, A1 schools were attributed accountability for all students assigned to that school, even if the students were placed in an alternative program (A2-A6). A1 schools and districts are still accountable for the students the A1 school places in A2-A6 programs, but students who are placed in A2-A6 programs by authorities not under the control of the public school system are now attributed to state accountability.

In 2003-2004, the number of students tested for accountability purposes in A2-A6 schools was 6,946. Of these students, 204 were in elementary school (end of primary through grade 5), 1,549 were in middle school (grades 6-8) and 5,193 were in high school (grades 9-12). Be aware that due to the capabilities of the current data system, these numbers reflect only students in schools that are coded as A2-A6 schools, regardless of what entity placed the students there. For comparative purposes, 465,991 students in A1 schools were tested for accountability purposes. Of these, 144,615 were in elementary school, 150,559 were in middle school and 170,817 were in high school. Note the A2-A6

student numbers (Attachment A) were subtracted out of the state numbers (Attachment B) to achieve the totals for A1 schools.

The data available from the 2003-2004 school year was used to create a state-level Kentucky Performance Report (KPR) for all students identified as residing in an A2-A6 program (Attachment A). These results indicate that students in A2-A6 programs score significantly lower than the total state population (Attachment B). The 2004 accountability index for students in A2-A6 programs was 40.6, while the state average for all students was 76.4. Although there are significant differences between the performance of students in A2-A6 programs and the overall state results, there has been growth in the A2-A6 accountability index over time. The accountability index trends for A2-A6 programs and the total state population are listed below.

Accountability Index by Grade Level (A2-A6 only)						
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Elementary	32.0	28.1	33.4	32.1	33.1	36.8
Middle	32.3	32.1	32.9	34.9	35.1	38.9
High	37.3	37.9	39.5	40.7	41.8	46.1
Total	33.9	32.7	35.3	35.9	36.7	40.6

Accountability Index by Grade Level (A1-A6 State Totals)						
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Elementary	66.5	68.4	70.9	72.9	76.1	81.5
Middle	64.0	65.8	67.8	68.7	71.5	74.1
High	63.4	64.8	66.9	68.4	70.1	73.5
Total	64.6	66.3	68.5	70.0	72.6	76.4

Policy Issue (s):

The state-level KPR for A2-A6 programs provides an overview of the performance of students in these programs, but the decision on how to monitor the success of A2-A6 programs is very complicated. These programs involve a variety of students with unique needs, who come in and out of programs, which creates difficultly for monitoring success over time. Staff in the Division of Student, Family and Community Support Services is working on the process and tools for improving the quality of these programs. A report on this effort will come to the June or August Board meeting.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The aggregation of A2-A6 program data into a state-level KPR is an important step in focusing attention on the performance of these students in reaching the goal of proficiency.

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Deputy Commissioner   **Commissioner of Education**

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